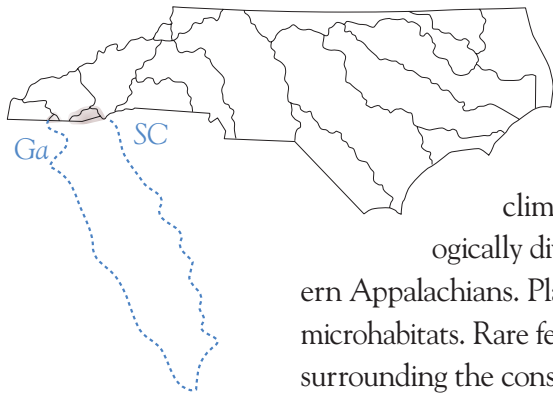


SAVANNAH RIVER BASIN

Numerous and spectacular waterfalls give the state's smallest river basin a gigantic presence. In the Savannah River Basin, wilderness abounds and diversity astounds. The upper basin receives the highest amount of rainfall in the eastern United States—



between 80 and 100 inches per year. This moisture-rich environment feeds rivers that fall and plunge through rock scarps.

With varied topography and a relatively warm climate, this basin contains some of the most ecologically diverse habitats in North Carolina and the Southern Appalachians. Plants more typical of the tropics thrive in unique microhabitats. Rare ferns and mosses live in temperate mini-rainforests surrounding the constant spray of waterfalls.

The Savannah River Basin is the only river basin in the state that contains no part of the river for which it is named. The major rivers in the

basin—the Chattooga, Horsepasture, Toxaway, Whitewater and Thompson—are the source waters for tributaries of the Savannah River that flow through South Carolina and Georgia (the Savannah River empties into the Atlantic Ocean at Savannah, Ga.). Owing to rugged scenery, the Chattooga River (9.7 miles in North Carolina) and a 4.5-mile segment of the Horsepasture River have been designated as National Wild and Scenic Rivers. The same segment of the Horsepasture is also a State Natural and Scenic River. The Horsepasture's



profile:

Total miles of streams and rivers: 176

Municipalities within basin: 1

Counties within basin: 4

Size: 172 square miles

Population: 11,482 (2000 U.S. Census)

KEVIN ADAMS



Whitewater Falls



BILL LEA

Hiker on Horsepasture River